



SAFETY --- Network

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BELT NEWS BELT NEWS

16,000 motorists get costly reminder to buckle up

Nearly 16,000 Michigan motorists received a costly reminder to fasten their safety belt during the two-week *Buckle Up or Pay Up, Click It or Ticket* mobilization.

Law enforcement agencies across the state made safety belt enforcement a priority, November 17–30, with agencies in 20 counties conducting highly visible safety belt enforcement zones. A total of 334 agencies reported their citation activity to the Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP).

Of the citations issued, 15,499 were for unbuckled adults and 490 were child restraint citations. Agencies also made 1,818 drunk driving and other alcohol arrests, 850 felony arrests, 3,902 misdemeanor arrests, cited 11,596 motorists for speeding and 1,652 motorists for driving with suspended licenses.

These figures include citations written in the 207 safety belt enforcement zones, where officers issued 8,663 safety belt citations for unbuckled adults and 179 child restraint citations.

Safety belt citations are down from the 19,347 written during the same period last year.

This enforcement period included the Thanksgiving Day holiday weekend. Although information is still preliminary, Michigan recorded 15 holiday traffic fatalities.

Michigan a leader in preventing holiday traffic deaths, and wants to stay that way

More than 500 Michigan law enforcement agencies hit the streets December 19 as they took part in a statewide, coordinated crackdown to combat drunk driving and prevent holiday traffic deaths. The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) believes that it is just such high visibility enforcement that has contributed to recent dramatic improvements in holiday traffic fatalities.

During last year's Christmas and New Years holidays, 705 people died on the nation's roads, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The number of traffic fatalities in Michigan during the same period? Four. And none of these deaths were alcohol-related.

"We believe that a strong presence and vigilant enforcement is central to making Michigan highways safe during the holidays," said Colonel Tadarial J. Sturdivant, director of the Michigan State Police.

This year's enforcement mobilization comes under the new, tougher drunk driving law that took effect September 30. The new law lowers the limit at which a motorist is considered a drunk driver.

You Drink & Drive. You Lose. is a national drunk driving mobilization that runs through January 4, 2004.

"Driving drunk is not an accident nor is it a victimless crime," said Colonel Sturdivant. "And it will not be tolerated. Law enforcement will be on the alert this holiday season, finding and arresting drunk drivers in Michigan."

Michigan was the 44th state to adopt a .08 blood alcohol content (BAC) standard for drunk driving offenses. NHTSA estimates the country would save 400–600 lives each year if all states adopted .08 laws.

According to the NHTSA, laboratory and on-road research shows that the vast majority of drivers are significantly impaired at .08 with regard to critical driving tasks such as braking, steering, lane changing, judgment and divided attention. Prior to the change in the law, .08 BAC was considered impaired driving in Michigan.

Studies show that motorists are more likely to drive sober when patrols are combined with highly visible public awareness efforts, according to NHTSA.

OHSP is coordinating the mobilization, providing federal traffic safety funds to boost patrols in selected areas and funding paid advertising to ensure widespread awareness of the program. In the current fiscal year, OHSP will provide nearly \$2 million in federal



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Law enforcement shine in new OHSP drunk driving commercial

Think you won't be caught driving drunk? Well, think again.

That's the message six police officers are sharing with Michigan motorists in new television and radio ads highlighting just how well law enforcement officers can determine if a driver has been drinking.

Featured in the new commercials are Sergeant John Babiarz of the Bay County Sheriff's Office; Sergeant Perry Curtis and Sergeant John Faccio of the Michigan State Police; Officer Sean Neal of the Detroit Police Department; Sergeant Jim Morrall of the Ingham County Sheriff's Office; and Officer James Campbell of the East Lansing Police Department.

Federal traffic safety funds paid to air the \$250,000 ad campaign, targeting motorists most likely to drive drunk: young men. No state general fund money was used to support this effort.

NHTSA announces new rollover test

Beginning with the 2004 model year, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will enhance its current rollover ratings system with the addition of a dynamic track test, the agency announced.

After considering a number of alternatives, NHTSA has decided that the dynamic test will use the so-called "fishhook" maneuver – a series of abrupt turns at varying speeds. A computerized steering system will be used in each test vehicle to maintain objectivity.

In 2002, 10,666 people were killed in rollover crashes, up five percent from 2001. Sixty-one percent of all occupant fatalities in sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and 45 percent of pickup truck deaths

were the result of a rollover crash. By contrast, 22 percent of passenger car fatalities in 2002 were the result of a rollover crash.

NHTSA's current consumer program rates rollover risk based on a vehicle's "static stability factor," which is an engineering calculation based on the track width (the distance between two wheels on the same axle) and the height of the center of gravity above the road. Starting with the 2004 model year, the rollover risk predictions will be based both on the vehicle's static stability factor and its performance in the dynamic test.

The rollover rating system – one to five stars – remains unchanged. One star is for rollover risk greater than 40 percent; five stars, 10 percent or less.

YDDYL

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money to law enforcement agencies for overtime patrols and another \$1.5 million in paid advertising during mobilization periods.

Twenty counties are receiving federal traffic safety funding for overtime patrols for this mobilization including: Bay, Berrien, Calhoun, Delta, Ingham, Genesee, Grand Traverse, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Kent, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Muskegon, Oakland, Ottawa, Saginaw, St. Clair, Washtenaw and Wayne counties.

In spite of the progress that has been made to reduce drunk driving, nearly 35 percent of all traffic fatalities in Michigan still involve alcohol and/or drugs. Last year, 422 people died and 9,414 were injured in alcohol-related crashes on Michigan roadways. Nearly 58,000 people were arrested for alcohol-related driving offenses in 2002. During the last national drunk-driving crackdown in December 2002, Michigan law enforcement officers arrested more than 2,700 motorists for alcohol-related offenses.

Those convicted for a first drunk driving offense face:

- Up to 93 days in jail
- Up to a \$500 fine
- Up to 360 hours of community service
- Up to 6 points on a driver's license
- Up to 180 days' license suspension.

In addition, convicted drunk drivers will be subject to a new \$1,000 fee for two consecutive years, for a total of \$2,000 in additional costs.

Anyone who refuses a breath test the first time is given an automatic one-year driver's license suspension.



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Safe Communities grants available

Michigan Safe Communities can apply for grants up to \$5,000 from the Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) until January 5, 2004.

Proposals should include a brief description of the project and the amount of grant funding required.

Describe activities, outcomes and partners. If grant funding will be used for developing marketing

materials, please describe the materials, target audience and outcomes. If proposals exceed \$50,000, grants will be awarded on a first come first served basis.

Submit one page grant proposals to Dan Vartanian at the Office of Highway Safety Planning at P.O. Box 30633, Lansing, MI 48909-8133 or e-mail proposals to vartanid@michigan.gov

For more information, contact Vartanian at (517) 333-5322.



Challenge award winners named

The following 12 agencies were chosen by random drawing and awarded a grant of \$5,000 toward the purchase of traffic safety equipment or overtime:

- Emmet County Sheriff's Office,
- Saginaw County Sheriff's Office,
- Belding Police Department,
- Blissfield Police Department,
- Clarkston Village Police Department,
- Grandville Police Department,
- Hazel Park Police Department,
- Nashville Police Department,
- Norton Shores Police Department,
- West Branch Police Department,
- Michigan State Police Bad Axe Post,
- Michigan State Police Lakeview Post.

PAAM Legal Update

There has been a question on what language should be used when issuing a ticket under the new Operated While Intoxicated law. In addition, I have been told that a few tickets that were written had the letters OWI for the charge and nothing else, or the tickets said OWI in violation of 257.625, with no subsection listed. And then some tickets used the old language of OUIL/UBAL, or a mixture saying OWI/OUIL. When charging a person with "drunk driving," the letters OUIL or UBAC or OUID should no longer exist in our vocabulary. For the crime of "drunk driving," the charge is now Operating While Intoxicated; that is the language that is used in the statute and should be the language used on the complaints and on the tickets. OUIL, UBAC, and OUID are the theories on which to prove Operating While Intoxicated. So it is absolutely correct that Operated While Intoxicated is now the charge, not OUIL/UBAC, please make sure the information on the ticket is clear.

If a ticket is written for the charge of Operating While Intoxicated, please make sure to write out "Operated While Intoxicated" and also include the section and subsection of the law being violated. In part, this is because of the concerns of confusion with Operated While Impaired which was OWI (now being called Operated While Visibly Impaired, or



Impaired Driving). Also, it is only with the subsections being listed that a person is accurately told what he or she is charged with.

Examples are provided below:

● Operating While Intoxicated, 257.625(1)

(This includes alcohol and any controlled substance not listed in subsection (8))

● Operating While Visibly Impaired, 257.625(3)

● Operating - Minor With Any BAC, 257.625(6)

● Operating With Schedule One Controlled Substances or Cocaine (any bodily amount) 257.625(8)

I have been told that the courts are going to be looking at the tickets very closely and if they are not filled in completely, they will be returned to the officer or the agency.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to give me a call at 517-334-6060 ext. 827 or email at: wallaced@michigan.gov.

Crash facts on the web; address has changed

Michigan traffic crash facts for 2002 can be found at www.michigantrafficcrashfacts.org.

In addition, reports from previous years are also available.

Changes in traffic control devices could make travel safer

Fluorescent pink signs to alert drivers to traffic crashes, large print on road signs for older drivers, and “animated eyes” to caution pedestrians at intersections are among the improvements federal highway engineers are recommending states consider to make travel safer and easier.

The recommendations are included in the Federal Highway Administration’s Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, a publication used by state and local transportation agencies in designing and placing traffic signs and signals and pavement markings.

Enhancements in the 2003 edition include increased letter size on street signs and turn-path pavement markings at intersections meant to help older drivers.

For pedestrians, guidelines include “animated eyes,” electronic signs that mimic back-and-forth eye movements to serve as a reminder to look both ways before crossing a street; “countdown signals” that tell pedestrians the time remaining to cross a street safely; and crosswalk markings and “in-street” pedestrian signs that focus the eyes of the driver on crosswalk activity.

The manual also includes provisions to help pedestrians with disabilities. For example, the use of barriers to assist in safe navigation of walkways and audible devices to communicate sign information will assist visually impaired individuals.

To improve safety for bicyclists, new bicycle lane markings and symbols are suggested.

Safety for highway construction workers would be improved by requiring high-visibility clothing and greater use of barricade devices.

It also suggests location and direction of travel reference signs to be posted at shorter intervals than the current “mileposts,” such as every one-tenth mile. These signs will help drivers and emergency responders in reporting and locating sites of breakdowns, crashes, and other highway incidents.

Nominations sought for 2003 traffic safety awards

Each year the Governor’s Traffic Safety Advisory Commission honors organizations, programs and individuals by presenting awards for outstanding contributions to traffic safety in Michigan. Nominations for the 2003 awards are now being accepted.

A nomination form can be found at www.michigan.gov/ohsp or obtained by contacting Lynn Sutfin at (517) 333-5754.

Individuals or organizations may be nominated by a person who is familiar with the activities for which the nominee is being considered. A person or organization may only be nominated in one category. No self nominations will be accepted, however, individuals may nominate their program, organization or activity.

Nominees must be a Michigan resident or an organization located in the state. All entries must be received on or before February 6, 2004.

Awards will be presented on April 28, 2004 at the Michigan Traffic Safety Summit Conference in Lansing.

MADD seeking nominations for 2004 Media Awards

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is accepting entries for the 2004 MADD Media Awards. The second annual MADD Media Awards program recognizes media professionals and organizations for outstanding coverage of issues related to MADD’s mission to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime and prevent underage drinking.

Awards will be presented to 16 winners in recognition of exemplary coverage of drunk driving and underage drinking issues. Categories include:

- Award of Excellence
- Television – National Network, Cable and News Service
- Television – Local Broadcast
- Radio Broadcasting
- Newspaper
- Magazine
- Spanish Language Media
- Community Awareness

Entry deadline for the 2004 MADD Media Awards is March 31, 2004. Awards will be presented during a

luncheon planned for June 24, 2004 in Washington D.C.

To be eligible, stories or programming must have been printed or broadcasted between April 1, 2003 and March 31, 2004 and have originated in the United States. Stories may be hard news or features, and may be a single piece of work or a series. There is no limit on the number of entries that may be submitted by an individual or media entity.

MADD is a non-profit organization with approximately 600 chapters and two million members and supporters nationwide. Since MADD’s founding in 1980, alcohol-related traffic deaths have decreased by more than one-third, thousands of victims and survivors have been served and programs have been launched across the country to involve youth, law enforcement and the community in tackling underage drinking.

For more information on the MADD Media Awards or to submit an entry form online, please visit www.madd.org/media-awards.